

## Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PINT, CA  
SUBJECT: LEVESQUE DISCUSSES REFERENDUM AND GOVERNMENT/PARTY  
RELATIONS AT PQ NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING

1. SPEAKING TO A PQ NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING SATURDAY, RENE LEVESQUE STATED THAT PARTY'S "SUPREME TEST" - THE REFERENDUM ON INDEPENDENCE - WOULD COME QUICKLY AND PARTY MEMBERS MUST BEGIN PREPARING FOR IT NOW. LEVESQUE SAID NOVEMBER 15 ELECTION HAD BEEN THE BEGINNING OF THE DECISIVE PERIOD FOR THE PQ AND THAT 1977 WOULD BE A DECISIVE YEAR. PREMIER SAID PARTY CAN WIN AND MUST WIN REFERENDUM BUT THAT IT WILL REQUIRE A GREATER EFFORT THAN EVER BEFORE. LEVESQUE SAID HE WAS MISQUOTED IN RECENT LA PRESSE INTERVIEW WHICH STATED THAT GOQ WOULD ANNOUNCE DATE FOR REFERENDUM IN ONE YEAR. LEVESQUE SAID SATURDAY THAT IT COULD COME IN TWO OR THREE YEARS AND THAT TIMETABLE WAS NOT YET ESTABLISHED. (THUS, HIS ABOVE REFERENCE TO "QUICKLY" DEALS ONLY WITH EXIGENCIES OF ORGANIZING PARTY'S EFFORT AND DOES NOT FORECAST TIMING OF REFERENDUM.) HE TOLD SOME 300 PARTY OFFICIALS THAT REAL START ON REMAKING QUEBEC WILL COME ONLY AFTER REFERENDUM. HE MADE IT CLEAR THAT FUNDAMENTAL OBJECTIVE OF BOTH PARTY AND GOVERNMENT REMAINS QUEBEC POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE.  
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WM LEVESQUE ALSO TOLD NATIONAL COUNCIL - PQ'S HIGHEST DECISION-MAKING BODY BETWEEN NATIONAL CONVENTIONS - THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT BE CONTROLLED BY PARTY POLICIES. "THE PARTY CAN NOT TAKE ITSELF FOR THE GOVERNMENT NOR CLAIM TO DICTATE PRIORITIES TO THE GOVERNMENT." LEVESQUE AGREED

WITH PARTY OFFICIALS PRESENT THAT WHILE HIS GOVERNMENT'S LEGISLATION WILL BE BASED ON PQ PROGRAM, GOQ WILL ALSO TAKE OTHER FACTORS INTO CONSIDERATION IN DRAFTING ITS BILLS. "THE GOVERNMENT REPRESENTS THE PEOPLE, AND THAT MEANS ALL QUEBECOIS," HE CONCLUDED. THE MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL APPEARED TO ACCEPT LEVESQUE'S STATEMENT ON RELATIONS BETWEEN PARTY AND GOVERNMENT.

3. COMMENT: THERE HAS BEEN MUCH CONCERN EXPRESSED OVER A CHAPTER IN PQ PROGRAM PROVIDING FOR SUBMISSION OF A PQ GOVERNMENT'S "GENERAL POLITICAL DECISIONS" TO THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR APPROVAL. SOME POLITICAL SCIENTISTS HAVE WRITTEN ARTICLES RECENTLY IMPLYING THAT PARTY PLATFORM PERMITTED EVEN GREATER VOICE THAN THAT FOR PARTY ORGANIZATION IN SHAPING GOVERNMENT DECISIONS. MANY QUEBECOIS WORRIED THAT "RADICALISM" OF LOCAL PARTY MILITANTS COULD THUS DIRECTLY INFLUENCE LEVESQUE'S GOVERNMENT DESPITE LEVESQUE'S "MODERATE" STANCE. LEVESQUE'S REMARKS WERE MEANT TO REASSURE THEM, TO SET STRAIGHT RELATIONS BETWEEN PARTY'S ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND HIS GOVERNMENT, AND TO CAUTION MILITANTS AGAINST IMPATIENCE ON POLICIES AND REFERENDUM. THE SUBJECT OF RELATIONS BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND PARTY WILL BE DISCUSSED IN UPCOMING NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING AND AT PARTY'S NEXT NATIONAL CONVENTION DUE TO BE HELD IN MAY. ECONOMIST PIERRE HARVEY, WHO LOST IN OUTREMONT NOVEMBER 15, ANNOUNCED THAT MAY CONVENTION WILL ALSO FEATURE A COMPLETE READJUSTMENT OF PARTY PLATFORM WHICH IS OUT OF DATE IN MANY AREAS.

4. SATURDAY'S MEETING DEMONSTRATED THE CONTINUING DOMINANCE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF PARTY MODERATES OVER THE SO-CALLED RADICAL MILITANTS. THE UNEXPECTED VICTORY OF NOVEMBER 15 APPEARS TO HAVE MOLLIFIED MORE MILITANT PARTY MEMBERS FOR THE MOMENT AS THEY WERE SURPRISINGLY QUIET DURING THE MEETING. THE OUTCOME OF THE MEETING ALSO DEMONSTRATED THAT THE LEGISLATIVE WING OF THE PARTY WILL CONTROL THE PARTY'S ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AT LEAST UNTIL THE MAY CONGRESS. RELATIONS BETWEEN THE LEGISLATIVE WING OF THE PARTY (WHOSE NUMBERS INCREASED FROM 6 TO 70 AND WHICH NOW HAS GOVERNMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY) AND THE PARTY'S ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE (OFTEN CALLED EXECUTIVE WING) HAVE ALWAYS BEEN A SOURCE OF CONFLICT WITHIN PARTY. IN LAST FEW YEARS, DEPUTIES - WHETHER "MODERATES" LIKE BEDARD, LEGER, LESSARD, AND JACQUES-YVAN MORIN OR "RADICAL" LIKE BURNS OR CHARRON - HAVE OFTEN BEEN AT ODDS WITH MINORITY OF RADICALS IN PARTY ORGANIZATION (MAINLY REPRESENTING EAST MONTREAL CONSTITUENCIES) WHO OPPOSED IN THE NAME OF "IDEOLOGICAL PURITY" SUCH ELECTION-ORIENTED STEPS AS THE REFERENDUM STRATEGY. MODERATES IN THE PARTY

SUCH AS RENE LEVESQUE, CLAUDE MORIN AND OTHERS WHO UNITED  
WITH PARTY'S LEGISLATIVE  
DELEGATION TO DEFEAT MILITANTS  
AT 1974 CONGRESS HAVE NOW BEEN ELECTED IN LARGE NUMBERS  
TO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY THUS COMPLETING RELOCATION OF REAL  
PARTY POWER IN LEGISLATIVE WING. AT THE UPCOMING MAY CONGRESS,  
MANY OF THE DEPUTIES WHO ALSO CONTINUE TO HOLD POSITIONS  
IN PARTY ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE WILL HAVE TO RESIGN THEIR  
PARTY POSITIONS IN ORDER TO REESTABLISH INDEPENDENT (AT LEAST  
IN NAME) POSITION OF PARTY VIS-A-VIS LEGISLATIVE  
DELEGATION. HOWEVER, WITH THE NEW IMPORTANCE OF RURAL AREAS  
(WHOSE PQ ORGANIZATIONS ARE GENERALLY QUITE MODERATE)  
FOLLOWING THE PARTY'S MANY NOVEMBER VICTORIES OUTSIDE URBAN  
CENTERS, TOP PARTY LEADERS SHOULD HAVE NO TROUBLE FINDING  
NEW, MODERATE, WORKING-LEVEL PARTY OFFICIALS TO REPLACE THOSE  
NOW ELECTED AS DEPUTIES AND THUS MAINTAIN COMPLETE CONTROL  
OF PARTY ORGANIZATION.

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